

APPLICANT FEEDBACK SUMMARY

2013 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

Legal Applicant: Utah Conservation Corps

Application ID: 13AC147357

Program Name: AmeriCorps – Utah Conservation Corps

For the purpose of enhancing our programs by improving the quality and quantity of applications to the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), we are providing specific feedback regarding the strengths and weaknesses of this application. These comments are not meant to represent a comprehensive assessment; rather the analysis represents those elements that had the greatest bearing on the rating of the application. Please note that this feedback consists of summary comments from more than one reviewer. For this reason, some of the comments may seem to be inconsistent or contradictory. Comments are not representative of all of the information used in the final funding decision.

Reviewers' Summary Comments:

(+) The applicant cited the need to grow youth and employment training programs related to the environment due to the fact that 38% of the Department of Interior and 35% of the Department of Agriculture workforce plans to retire within the next two years.

(+) The applicant used return-on-investment reports and the multiplier effect to justify why the AmeriCorps initiative is more effective and generates more returns than the initial investment. The return-on-investment concept is an effective marketing tool that attracts partners and is very persuasive. The applicant mentions other sources that suggest engaging AmeriCorps services is the most cost effective way of addressing the needs of the community.

(+) The disaster response training and recovery activities are clearly described as are the activities of the conservation field crews. This dual purpose emphasis, in addition to the recruiting within diverse populations and the provision of bilingual educational materials, makes the effectiveness of the AmeriCorps members a positive.

(+) The applicant clearly stated the number of AmeriCorps members requested and delineated the slot types. The proposal also explained that the organization of the program design around the differing service terms was designed to align with seasonal service; community needs assessment, and cost-effective strategies.

(-) The applicant provided more national than state data and evidence to support its stated need, limiting the proposal's persuasiveness as to the extent or severity of the nationally supported needs in the relatively undefined target area.

(-) The applicant did not provide any data to quantify how many individuals were bilingual or who would benefit from the proposed bilingual education and the applicant's proposed intervention of cultivating a diverse workforce.

(-) The applicant failed to describe the unique characteristics and population of why a host site is chosen over other location(s). Lack of such specificity makes it difficult to justify why a field crew is placed in a target community. In addition, some of the citations have no references and that seems to diminish the credibility of evidence.

- (-) The applicant did not describe the activities that the AmeriCorps members will perform to restore habitat or identify the nonprofit groups that will be served, or how the nonprofit groups were selected.
- (-) Although employment is an identified need in the application, the applicant did not measure employment in the surveys.